

SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF INVENTION

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Molded Latex Street for modeling.

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

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|-----------|------------|----------------|----------|
| 4,652,239 | Mar., 1987 | Brimberg | 434/80. |
| 4,842,194 | Jun., 1989 | Halbert | 238/10B. |
| 5,000,715 | Mar., 1991 | Johnson | 446/427. |
| 5,326,267 | Jul., 1994 | Brokaw | 434/151. |
| 6,089,466 | Jul., 2000 | Fulton, et al. | 238/10B. |

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not Applicable.

REFERENCE TO SEQUENCE LISTINGS

Not Applicable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to miniature models. More precisely, the present invention relates to a miniature model of a cobblestone street.

Hobbyist, including but not limited to, model railroaders, military modelers, model wargamers and doll house craftsmen build miniature models that are near duplicates of their full scale counterparts. To present these models in a diorama or vignette, particularly in an older urban environment, surrounding scenery in the diorama can include a cobblestone street, which also must be modeled by the hobbyist. Various methods exist for modeling these streets in dioramas. Individual miniature stones may be purchased then laid and secured in a pattern to form a cobblestone street, but this method can be extremely time consuming, particularly if the street must cover a large area. Another alternative is to form the street area with a carveable material, then carve out a pattern of a cobblestone street, which is also time consuming.

PRIOR ART

Prefabricated miniature streets are available for the hobbyist, but choices are limited. Popular choices include a cobblestone pattern either printed or embossed on a paper based material, or a cobblestone pattern cast out of a material such as plaster, resin or vacuum formed with styrene.

Paper based cobblestone streets: A model of a street may be printed on paper or other paper based products such as card stock or thin cardboard. Printed cobblestone streets only show detail from above (2 dimensional), and the individual stones have no texture. If the street pattern is embossed into the paper based product the individual stones will show some 3 dimensional detail, but both printed and, or embossed streets are usually made by machine and tend to represent an extremely even pattern which is not desirable for representing older cobblestone streets.

Cast cobblestone streets: A model of a street may be produced by casting from a female mold of a street. The casted product usually shows excellent 3 dimensional details, however the materials generally used in casting tend to be difficult to successfully cut to different sizes, being prone to breaking into an undesirable shape, or if a dense material, time consuming to cut. The thickness needed in these castings to ensure the integrity of the molded piece may be undesirable for some modeling purposes.

Vacuum formed cobblestone streets: A model of a street may be produced by a vacuum formed styrene process. These have many characteristics of the present invention, but the individual stones tend to be molded in a uniform height and pattern which maybe undesirable depending on the modelers need. Styrene lacks the flexibility and ease of cutting of the present invention.

This present invention of producing a cobblestone street from latex and gauze can show exceptional detail of individual stones or bricks in a street in 3 dimensional details. The end product results in a thin base when glued in place. Excessive height that must be filled in by the modeler with a resin or plaster cast street does not exist. Because of the elasticity of latex the present invention will not shatter or crack. The latex may be cut with scissors to achieve specific shapes desired by the modeler.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a model of a cobblestone street, wherein a female mold of a cobblestone street is layered with liquid latex rubber to cover the mold. A layer of gauze is placed on to the wet latex and then a second layer of liquid latex is applied on to the gauze. Once the layers of latex have dried the single piece is peeled from the mold. When laid flat this single piece will represent a cobblestone street.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING

Fig. 1: Top view of finished latex street

Fig. 2: Perspective view: Sample of street depicting pattern details and flexibility of latex in finished product.

Fig. 3: Perspective view: Sample of street depicting pattern details and gauze embedded in dried latex layers before trimming product.

Fig. 4: Perspective view: Sample depicting side view of latex street. Scale is exaggerated so viewer can discern pattern details and gauze.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a model of a cobblestone street. The word cobblestone as used in this invention is used as a descriptive term common to the layperson, reflecting streets built from separate pieces of a rock based product, either laid in a distinct pattern or arranged closely together to form a solid base for a street. This descriptive term (cobblestone) would include patterns made from bricks, pavers or fieldstones, as well as true cobblestone. The model is fabricated by a process according to claim 1, involving obtaining a female mold of a cobblestone street, wherein the individual bricks, or stones in the mold of the street are depressions. Liquid latex rubber is applied on to the mold, filling in the depressions. A layer of gauze is applied on to the wet latex, and then a second coat of liquid latex is applied on to the gauze. The open weave of the gauze should allow the liquid latex from the 2 coats to blend and saturate the gauze. The layers of latex and gauze are peeled from the mold once it has dried. The dried layers of latex and gauze, when laid flat, will represent a cobblestone street. The molded piece may be cut by the modeler to the shape needed to fit the specific diorama, and may be painted by the modeler to finish the piece. The present invention allows a variety of molds to be used to represent different styles of stones or bricks found in cobblestone streets. In an alternate use of the molded pieces, they may be used to represent cobblestone flooring or may be used vertically to represent stone or brick walls if attached to a freestanding piece of material.